Modern Life

O. 95. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27th, 1915. (Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper.) ONE PENNY.

THE S(N)UB-MARINE.

Modern Life

No. 95. Week ending February 27 One Penny

EDITORIAL & GENERAL OFFICES: 20 and 21, Essex Street, Strand, London, W.C. Telegrams: "Eflinredom, Estrand, London." Telephone: City 8798.

PUBLISHING DEPARTMENT: 20, Milford Lane, Strand, London, W.C.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION, 6s. 6d.; six months, 3s. 3d.; three months, 1s. 8d., post free. Subscriptions are to be forwarded to the Publishing Department at above address:

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ROYAL AND SOCIETY NEWS

Exclusive to "Modern Life."

Tears in Buckingham Palace: Prince George mortified at being sent back to School.

I hear a delightful story from Buckingham Palace. When Prince George came home for the Christmas holidays he told his mother that he desired to be sent to the front, and though the Queen was amused the young Prince was so insistent that the Queen promised to speak to his Majesty about it. Prince George was forbidden to speak to his father himself, and the Queen promised to see about it, and let him know before the time came to go back to Broadstairs. Prince George kept worrying his brother Albert (who was invalided home from the Collingwood in the North Sea), but could get no satisfaction; and when it came to the day that he had to go back to school the poor boy broke down and cried with mortification. He told Princess Mary it was a "bally shame," and said he was in his thirteenth year and "ought to do his bit!" Princess Mary was awfully cut up about it, and has been telling the story to everyone, feeling almost as much annoyed as her favourite brother because they wouldn't let him go to the war. I hear Lord Kitchener was asked how long the war would last, and he said, "Between three and four years, anyway." So Prince George will be able to "do his bit!" right enough if he waits.

* * *

Austria's Next Emperor en Famille.

Superstitious folk will find much to worry over in the plight of the Austrian Heir-Presumptive, who was placed in mourning for his wife's sister, Princess Marie Pia of Parma, early this month, and within a day or two was gladdened by the news that his Archduchess had given birth to another boy. Archduke Carl Joseph was kept very much in the shadows for years before Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated. He was not, of course, one of Archduke Franz Ferdinand's children, and the late Heir-Presumptive had designs for making his son (the Duke of Hohenberg) by his morganatic wife (née Sophie Chotek) the heir to the Dual-Monarchy after the old Emperor was dead. However, as the Archduke was killed by the Servian assassins, and his wife with him, the old Emperor was able to rule the roost as usual.

* * *

Why the Archduke went to Berlin.

And the artful way in which he immediately summoned the Hohenberg children to the Palace in Vienna, after their parents were murdered, and disposed of them so that they could make no claims to the heirship, I narrated in these columns at the time. Archduke Carl Joseph is the son of the late Archduke Otto, one of the quaintest birds in the Imperial Austrian nest. However, he seems a worthy young fellow, in spite of being a Hapsburg, and he must have a tongue in his head, for the result of his recent visit to the Kaiser in Berlin was promptly seen in the immense German force which marched forth to the Carpathians to hearten and inspirit the Austro-Hungarians against the advancing Russians in the Bukovina.

* * *

A Stormy Life Nobly Ended.

I have frequently shown how our King and Queen can do pretty actions that are almost unheard of among the crowd. They did one the other day, when they sent a message of condolence to the Earl and Countess of Ranfurly over the death of their only son, Viscount Northland. Poor old "Robin," of course, was not on their Majesties' list since the affair of Maidenhead, but when he fell like a man for his country their Majesties forgot all his little peccadilloes, and remembered only that the heir to a noble estate and all that makes life worth living was amongst the first to answer his country's call, just as he did in South Africa more than a dozen years ago. And hence Lord and Lady Ranfurly received from their Majesties this charmingly-worded message:

"The King and Queen are profoundly grieved to hear of the loss which you and the Army have sustained by the death of your only son in the service of his country. Their Majesties deeply regret that this young life, so full of promise, should have been suddenly cut off, and they offer you their true sympathy in your great sorrow."

* * *

Charming Forgetfulness of the King and Queen.

The touching reference to poor old Robin's "young life so suddenly cut off," was, of course, their Majesties' deliberate reminder that they remembered Lord Northland only as a chivalrous victim of the war, and forgot all that made him such a trouble to his fond parents in the past. It is nice to know that Lord Northland leaves two little sons to succeed to the honours of Ranfurly, which are well worth honouring, for the Knox family derive from old John Knox, the Reformer, while Lord Ranfurly is himself descended from James Penn, the Quaker, after whom Pennsylvania is named.

* * *

Lord Ranfurly's Record in New Zealand.

Many years ago Lord Ranfurly went out to the States to see the statue which had been erected to his famous ancestor in Pennsylvania city. A very happy event in the Ranfurly family which preceded the death of the heir in the trenches was the surprise wedding of the only unmarried daughter of the family, Lady Eileen Knox, who was, years ago, engaged to Mr. Grant, but broke it off owing to his being found out in a flirtation of a boisterous nature. Now Lady Eileen has practically run away with a young subaltern in the Bucks Yeomanry. She was one of the train-bearers at Queen Mary's Coronation.

* * *

Liked to Know the Girls All Loved Him.

Lord Ranfurly put up a record some years ago by taking on the Governorship of New Zealand, and sticking the job for seven long years without a break at home—probably a record that has had no parallel in British annals. Lord Ranfurly possessed just that trait of sincerity which was so conspicuous by its absence in his unfortunate son. Lord Northland was the rashest of the Guardsmen of his day. He loved to feel the women were "in love" with him. He had no realisation of a woman's tremors, but he meant them no harm. Poor little Clara Taylor, the erstwhile chorus-girl in the "Earl and the Girl" at the Adelphi, had no chance when she was hurled into the arms of Lord Northland.

* * *

"Perhaps She Has!"

Three months was sufficient for her to be convinced that "she would die for him" if necessary. Perhaps she has—God knows! Her luck, nevertheless, had been phenomenal, for she hadn't been over from Washington many months when Major Stirling, the dapper Laird of Kippendavie, was head over heels in love with her, and

DUTY FIRST.

Uncle: "Well, Fitzy, my boy, have you ever thought of—er—serving your country?"
Fitzy: "Weally, Nunky, I'm afwaid I haven't time. You see, I get asked out so much."

not taking "No!" for an answer. He and Robin were in the Guards, and both had been out in S.A. Before the Laird was compelled to introduce his nutty little American wife to Robin all went well, but from that hour everything went to pieces. The Laird told his wife Northland would "leave her on the mat." And he did. With the aid of the lovely Mrs. Atherton, married bliss in the Kippendavie ménage was botched hopelessly, and when they all went down to that most ill-fated house in Britain, Amberley Cottage, at Maidenhead, there was *some* romance!

* * *

God Rest His Soul.

Wild flights from town by night in motor-cars at forty miles an hour; dodging "tecs" amongst the shrubs and houseboats; mad letters full of love and adoration by every post; expostulations, threats, and lawyers' letters from pa's, ma's, and outraged sisters; hustled trips to Paris; jealous meetings in Mrs. Atherton's bedroom; charges, counter-charges, enfiladings, retreats, frontal attacks and ambuscades—*what* a life that was, to be sure! And when the "bust-up" came, "Robin," of course, did precisely what was predicted of him. He brazened the whole thing out, and not long after threw his charms around Sir Daniel Cooper's daughter, and married her in London as boldly as if he had never heard the name of Mrs. Atherton in his life. His young widow is a potential millionairess, so all was well. Money talks, it is true, but money also forgets! Anyway, as I have pointed out, "Robin" was as brave as he was rash, and he has died like a gentleman, and worthy of his forefathers. God rest his soul!

* * *

Spoiling an Interesting Anonymity.

While on the subject of the "milingtary," would you like to know the name of that remarkable buck about whom such a heroic yarn was quoted from the "Eton College Chronicle" by the *Daily Telegraph*, but whose name was so carefully hidden? If so, gather round. It is a story of real-life-romance which the Eton paper tells, but its point is somewhat lost beneath such freezing anonymity. So I am going to give the show away. No one can say, therefore, that all the credit for his devilment and pluck which Lieutenant X now earns has been due to any advertising on his part. Not a bit, for I am the only individual who knows his name, apart, of course, from his old pals at Eton, who will recognise him at once. In the *Daily Telegraph* he was referred to as "Lieutenant X——, the eldest son of Sir —— Bt., of —— Castle, in ——shire, Lord Lieutenant of the County, and Master of the Hounds."

* * *

A Chapter of Accidents.

The story goes that Lieutenant X—— was at Eton when the South African War broke out, and, being a grand horseman, having followed the hounds from his youth up, he obtained a direct commission in the —— Hussars, and did excellent service with the regiment in the war. I need not go over the whole story, save to add that amongst other things he served on the staff of the German Red Hussars at Potsdam in order to qualify for his appointment on the staff of the Brigadier-General, and entered the British Cavalry College. Nearly smashed up on the Curragh, he was again seriously injured while training for the Military Boxing Competition, and had to stop in bed a year, and his Army career was, it was supposed, ended. They wouldn't even take him into the Reserve of Officers. For three years he wandered in S. America, then came home, fell in love with the Lady Y.Z., daughter of the Earl of Z., and begot a son.

* * *

Earl's Son-in-Law as Ranker.

Then the European War broke out, and X., taking no chances of being snubbed for official rank, promptly joined the —— Dragoons as a private in the Army in which, but for his smash, he might by that time have been major of his old regiment. The —— Dragoons happened to be in his old friend's (the Brigadier-General's) Brigade in France, and the General, knowing his man

well, made him his orderly, so that he carried his brigadier's flag all through the retreat at Mons. How Corporal X—— subsequently won promotion to be a Second-Lieutenant in the field, how, later on, he won the D.S.O. for killing eleven Germans with his own hand when leading the 12th Lancers to position for counter-attack, need not be further given, as they have all appeared in the *Telegraph*. But such deeds deserve to be known and honoured. So we rudely dissolve the anonymity. Lieutenant X—— is no other than Osmond Trahearne Deudreath Williams, son and heir of Sir A. O. Williams, of Castell-Deudreath, Merionethshire. Sir A. Williams is Lord Lieutenant of Merionethshire, and his gallant son married, two years ago, Lady Gladys Finch-Hatton, a daughter of the Earl of Winchilsea and Nottingham. 'Ossie Williams, by the way, is a pal of Prince Arthur's.

* * *

"Made a Baronet Before He Was Born."

While on the subject of the baronetage, I am reminded that old Sir John Campbell, who died last week, was, besides being the last of the Crimean generals, the recipient of a distinction which is unique. In December, 1912, King George made him a baronet, with precedence from 1804. How a man could be made a baronet before he was born strikes one as a real Royal conundrum until one hears the explanation. Sir John Campbell was described by Burke as the ninth holder of a baronetcy created in 1627. The first baronet, Sir Donald Campbell, was twice married. His first wife was Jane, daughter of the sixth Earl of Argyll, and she died without bearing her husband any children. Sir Donald then married his deceased wife's half-sister, Anne, one of the Earl of Argyll's bend-sinister brats by a village wench. By her he had a son, John, who, however, died before his father. The Baronet's other children were daughters, and, in order to perpetuate the title, therefore, Sir Donald in 1643 resigned that dignity into the King's hands for a new enfeoffment of it, and the lands annexed in favour of his nephew, George Campbell.

* * *

Curious Chapter in the Baronetage.

When Sir Donald died, his estate of Ardnamurchan reverted to the Duke of Argyll, but his estate of Airds passed to his nephew. The latter, however, did not claim the title of baronet, nor did the four next succeeding heirs. The fifth, however, John Campbell, direct descendant of George Campbell, assumed the title in 1804, and was regarded as the seventh Baronet. The Baronet who died last week was his grandson. The lapse in the use of the title for 150 years, and the resumption of it apparently without official confirmation, are the facts which explain the necessity of the new creation of 1912, with precedence from 1804, when the title was reassumed. The late bearer of the Baronetcy, for whom this unique distinction was made, was well worthy of the honour, for he figured in the Crimean, China, Afghan and Zhob Valley expeditions. His son, now another Sir John Campbell, was born at Poona, and is following in his father's footsteps at the front. He was also in the South African War with the West Australian forces.

* * *

Kitchener and Khaki.

I am amused at all this talk about Kitchener's dislike of having the volunteers in khaki. There is no doubt about it, when the "Life of Lord Kitchener" comes to be written, if it is done honestly and frankly, it will

Mr. Newlywed: "Do you think the smoke from my cigar will spoil the curtains?"
Mrs. Newlywed: "Ah, you are really the most unselfish and thoughtful hubby in the whole world; certainly it will."
Mr. Newlywed: "Well, then, take the curtains down."

"Sister Susie's Sewing Shirts for Soldiers"?

provide some of the most amazing chapters of biography ever printed. K. of K. considers that every able man should be immediately summoned to the colours, in order that he may get his five million men, and get along with the war. The Government, pledged all its life to the worship of "voluntaryism," dare not let K. of K. have his way, lest they be made to look fools. Kitchener's objection is lest some of the slackers with sufficient spirit to feel the slings and arrows of other people's contempt, but with not sufficient spirit to leave their own snug parlours so long as they aren't made, will take to a grey-green uniform as volunteers, and thus evade their just obligation to go abroad and do their bit in earnest.

* * *

Determined Not To Take The Stony Stare.

However that may be (and I am not altogether of Lord Kitchener's belief in that matter), I must say the man who arouses my admiration just now is the grey-haired, much-married type of man whom one occasionally meets in a khaki uniform, and who, live or die, is determined that no one shall give him the stony stare of a coward and a lurcher. But, even then, all the good work for Old England isn't being done by the men in khaki. Oh, dear, no! Here's an instance. Strolling down St. James's Street last Friday afternoon, I was nearly bowled over at the corner of King Street by an old gentleman with a whitish beard and a very smart topper, who was running about like a two-year-old with a parcel of papers in his hand, blissfully forgetful that he was within a couple of years of seventy, and deserved to be at home tied to his chair, with a bowl of hot gruel, a respirator, a big fire, and a foot-warmer.

* * *

Not Playing Soccer In Pall Mall.

As soon as the old gentleman's apologies pulled me together, I recognised the cheery voice of Lord Kinnaird, whose charming daughter took such motherly compassion upon the Duke of Bedford's son, Lord Tavistock, when he made that runaway match with the lady from Oxford some two months ago. I said, "My dear Lord Kinnaird, you'll surely have an accident if you run about like this. You know, you aren't playing Soccer in Pall Mall. And wherefore this haste, prithee?" Then quoth the dear old Laird, "Why, my dear boy, it's this Entertainment Fund, you know. We *must* keep the lads amused. There are millions of them with nothing to do in the evenings, and 'Satan finds some mischief still,' don'cherknow. Desborough and Methuen and I are doing our best, but there are *so* many things to do. Really one must hustle in these matters."

* * *

The Noble Footballer.

And away the President of the Football Association flew. I watched him down the street and round the corner. He is one of the finest Englishmen (Scotsmen, I beg his pardon) that ever toed the leather, and he *can* toe it even now. Sixty years ago he taught the boys at Eton how to play Soccer. Fifty years ago he taught Cambridge how to play it; forty years ago he taught the game to London, and he is still teaching what time his eldest son, the Master of Kinnaird, is doing his bit in the trenches with the Scots Guards. Lord Kinnaird played in the first London v. Sheffield matches at Steelopolis in 1872, and later on in the same season he captained the first London Soccer team that ever played Nottingham on the Trent Bridge Ground.

* * *

An Aristocrat of Blood.

Lord Kinnaird is an aristocrat of blood, with the strength of an ox and the gentleness of a Society medico. He is very rich, and could afford to be "aughty!" He has never been known to wear shin-guards on the field, yet he is softly religious, and has been three times High Commissioner for the Church in Scotland. One of the Britishers who ought to be permanently remembered by a portrait in the National Portrait Gallery. And *they are very few!*

LIVELY LITTLE LEADERS

Nuts and Flappers.

I saw an advertisement of a play in a provincial town a little while ago that rather took my fancy. The advertisement informed me that the play for which patrons were so ardently desired was guaranteed "to provide the audience with a regular knockdown thrill." I didn't go to see the play, but I am quite sure that it was a bit of all right, for a friend who went to see it told me that it was the story of how a beautiful and innocent young flapper was hurled to moral and material destruction by sitting on the edge of a precipice with a second-hand Romeo, and tumbling down upon the jagged and cruel rocks some thousands or millions of feet or miles below. And if that is not enough to provide the requisite amount of thrill, even in these very modern and very thrilling days, I don't know what is.

But I am not going to write about that thrilling play. I just mention it in order, by means of comparison, to point out that I have just received something even bigger in thrills than even the proprietor of that play promised me if I would invest a humble tanner in the humble gallery of his humble theatre. And, strange to say, I have received my thrill, not from a play, but from a bishop. Which sounds, perhaps, a bit strange, so I must proceed to explain.

With all the self-sacrificing heroism of a journalist who conscientiously studies public matters, I was reading the *Daily Mail* after breakfast the other morning when I came across a short report of a sermon by the Bishop of Carlisle. In this sermon the good Bishop provided me with the thrill aforementioned and aforesaid. He informed me that we were learning at any rate one thing from the war, and that was that there was good in everybody. For instance (he said), he himself had poured no small amount of contempt on the class of persons called "nuts." He did not (he continued) like a "nut," and did not see that he had any right to exist. But some of them had undoubtedly come out as heroes during the war. They had gone with their lives in their hands, and from the highest to the lowest in the land the same spirit of self-sacrifice had been shown.

That is what the good Bishop said, and every word of it is, of course, quite true, as I myself pointed out in this column not so many weeks ago. Indeed, were it not for the fact that I am, like all journalists, somewhat consumed with the exuberance of my own modesty, I should be inclined to think that the good Bishop had been reading my article in MODERN LIFE, and had coolly and calmly annexed it as the basis of his sermon to the good people of Carlisle. So it wasn't what the Bishop said that gave me the thrill. It was the discovery that war can do such wonderful things, can make such vital differences in the ways in which people look upon life, that even bishops can be induced by its means to become sensible personages; even bishops can do justice to their fellow-creatures; even a "nut" can be brought within the patronage of the Church, and can receive that due which has, in Church history, sometimes been given even to devils, but has not hitherto been given to the flowery and sometimes flippant young men whom in these days of descriptive writing we designate as "nuts." The thrill that I received, reader, was very great. The thrill of which all Englishmen are proud. The thrill that comes from a sense of the fact that justice has at last been done to those who are falsely considered by some to be among the most useless members of the community. I have always loved the "nut." I take off my hat to the "nut" and to the Bishop who at last has had the courage to canonise him. Long years ago I was a bit of a "nut" myself, and now I feel that even a journalist can smite his breast with his hands in holy pride, and feel that he has not lived in vain.

But still, the bishops and the clergy have got a long way to go yet before they can congratulate themselves that they have done justice to all classes of the community in connection with this great big war. Perhaps we musn't expect too much all at once. But I would like to put in a plea for the, so to say, better-half of the "nut"—I mean the flapper. It is a matter of grave concern to me that while the "nut" is at last getting something like justice, the poor little innocent flapper is still to not a little extent downtrodden and forlorn. I was reading "David Copperfield" again the other day, and the thought occurred to me that if something is not done for the flapper she stands a good chance of becoming a permanently lonely and forlorn creature like Mrs. Gummidge of immortal memory. There seems to be such a gigantic tendency to sing the praises of our soldiers (and quite rightly, of course) that the flappers who are so closely connected with them seem to stand a chance of being forgotten altogether—no, not forgotten, remembered all too much, even attacked. You know, reader, there is always a multitude of goody-goody people in this dear old land of ours who are never happy unless they can discover and trounce some section of the community who are not able to defend themselves, but who are, nevertheless, just as good as anybody else, and perhaps a darned sight better. These goody-goody people seem to have one object in life, and that is to prove that they themselves are booked to a certainty for reserved seats in the realms above, but that some particular section of humanity is marching helter-skelter along the road to Hades itself. And just at the present moment it appears to be the poor flappers who have been singled out for everlasting damnation if they do not do exactly and precisely everything that the said goody-goody people would like them to do. I therefore would like to plead for the flappers with as much energy (and more) as the Bishop of Carlisle has pleaded for the "nuts." I am led to do this because I have recently been disgusted beyond measure by the way in which a certain clergyman in the North of England has gone out of his way to denounce the flappers in a certain town where at the present moment some ten thousand soldiers are getting ready to fight on the fair fields of France for our national and imperial rights.

Now, I should like to denounce this clergyman, and all others like him, as a coward and a cur. And I should like to recommend to him some of the principles of justice and truth that are, I am glad to see, prominent in the character of the common-sense bishop to whom I have referred. I don't, of course, know anything about the particular flappers in the particular town referred to. But I take my stand upon human nature. What is a flapper? A flapper is a young girl who has not, perhaps, as much right to call herself a perfectly developed woman as her mother, and who has (and quite rightly) a sense of the romance and the jollifications of life. That is what a flapper is, as I take it. She has been brought up and trained by one of the mothers of England, and I am not going to believe that the mothers of England do not, in the vast majority, bring up their girls correctly. What it comes to, therefore, is this (if we are to believe this clergyman), that the flappers of the country, or large numbers of them, are deliberately leading our soldiers from the paths of virtue right on to the rocks of vice and shame. It doesn't pay the clergy to attack our soldiers. Some of them, therefore, with all the bravery of those who daren't go and do a bit of fighting themselves, have the impertinence to attack the weak, the merry little flappers who want to be in the great fight in an indirect way themselves, who want to be seen with the gallant men who are going to fight for them, who want just a touch of romance in their lonely lives, and can only get it at such a time as this out of the friendship of their soldier friends. Anyhow, I am quite sure of this—that if any of these hypocritical, lying, calumniating, nauseating, goody-goody wretches happen to stray, in their travels, into the company of a body of the soldiers who are prepared to defend their girl friends as energetically as they are ready to defend the shores of England, they will have what is poetically called a damned bad time. They will get what is called short shrift. They will be crippled and crushed and thawed and melted into nothingness with the rapidity of an icicle in hell.

JONATHAN GRUB STREET.

WHO, WHY, WHEN AND WHERE.

LITTLE QUESTIONS FOR PROMINENT PEOPLE.

Will the new Austrian Kings of Poland and Belgium be crowned on the same day in their respective capitals?

* * *

Why Horatio Bottomley gets so angry if you ask him if it isn't going to be a "short war"? And why he does not invite the Esquimaux and the people of Timbuctoo to come along and help us, as well as the Spaniards, the Portuguese, the Italians, and the Roumanians, with whom he so earnestly pleads for "help"?

* * *

And whether Lord Kitchener has yet seen Horatio's scream, "Later on we will paint the whole of Berlin red"?

* * *

Why A. G. Hales wrote, "I expect it (the German Invasion of Britain) so soon that we may begin to count the days from now on?" Is Mr. Hales still counting? And if so, will he ever stop counting?

* * *

Is it true that there is a German submarine in the Atlantic waiting for the first of the Russian wheat cargoes from the Mediterranean?

* * *

Whether Roumania will ever butt in in the war? And whether her obligations to Germany are not a mill-stone round her neck?

* * *

Vodka having been prohibited in Russia, and absinthe in France, what is going to be prohibited in Britain? Why not ginger-beer?

* * *

Is it true that Sir Thomas Lipton's yacht has been armed as a cruiser? And whether she is not in for hot times in Austrian waters?

* * *

Whether Sir Thomas has yet heard about Sir Joseph Lyons's case at the White City? And wouldn't it be worth a dollar to see Tommy's face when he reads the reports of the case?

* * *

TYPES OF THE TIMES.

No. 2.—The Man who saved the guns at Cambrai.

Whether the Dowager Marchioness of Londonderry will go to reside at Wynyard Park now that her daughter-in-law has become the Marchioness at Newtownards, in County Down?

* * *

If Lord Rosebery isn't pleased with Lord Cromer's splendid compliment to him in the latter's new book about the deposed Khedive?

* * *

When the *Berliner Tageblatt* raves about Germany's "sixty-six millions of people of every age *and sex*," does it mean men, women and sausages?

* * *

If it is true that King George contemplates conferring the Order of Merit on Mr. Winston Churchill?

The identity of the Prime Minister's relative who has had so many shots at the Army Medical Corps, and eventually got "turned down" on account of his eyesight?

* * *

What does the Berlin press think of the "New York Herald"?

* * *

Why can't there be legislation to deal with the snobs who print on their notepaper telephonic addresses that do not exist?

* * *

If the deserved promotion of Colonel Seely to be Brigadier-General is not the fitting reward of a gallant soldier who is far happier at the war than he was at the War Office?

* * *

The identity of the humourist who in Trafalgar Square last week caused a big crowd to foregather by means of taking observations of suppositious Zeppelins with the assistance of a large telescope?

* * *

Whether we shall be suspected of frivolity if we venture to suggest that Flight-Commander, Claude Grahame-White has become a regular *felo de sea*?

* * *

Was the slippery surface solely responsible for the skids performed by the Peer's motor-car in Piccadilly early the other morning?

* * *

How is it that so many copies of the rare postage stamp have suddenly appeared from nowhere?

* * *

Who is the barrister who, owing to the war, has accepted a job as caretaker?

* * *

If the new telephone post may not shortly expect a horse-whipping at the hands of the husbands who are on his track?

* * *

Who were the "military" occupants of a private motor car the other night who were stopped by a Special Constable in the neighbourhood of Brompton, and immediately asked him the way to Aldershot? Why did these gentlemen make off whilst the Special was round at the back noting the number of the car?

* * *

If certain private individuals are not making large incomes at the present moment by running ostensible War Funds?

* * *

If Mr. John Hassall feels at all grateful to Mr. James Douglas for that ultra-effusive column of appreciation of his powers as a caricaturist in the *Daily News*? And why it should be necessary to point out the gleams of a shining star?

TABLOID TOPICS.

Berlin restaurants are now closed at midnight. Lest revellers should see in "The Day"?

* * *

Mrs. McKenna is learning to shoot. But her hubby is still being shot at, by the Opposition.

* * *

Kaiser Wilhelm has just broken a looking glass. Well, he can't go on breaking pledges *all* day long.

* * *

"Comps wanted: Stage age, etc."—*Daily News*. But stage age is so deceptive, as witness the girls in the front row of our revues.

* * *

"Further Advance in Shells" (news heading). So there is some truth in the rumours that our new big gun is ready for action.

* * *

The news from Dartmouth, that the old "*Britannia* is in the hands of a firm of battleship breakers" must be heartening to Von Tirpitz.

* * *

A Berlin message tells us that the Kaiser has gone to Wilhelmshaven for an inspection. He'll find all his ships still there, except those which we have sunk.

* * *

"'A Busy Day' is 'bucking up.' (I found £200 in the Apollo the other night.)"—(Mr. Gossip of the *Daily Sketch*.) Then, of course, Mr. G. went and had a very busy night.

* * *

"The orange-making season has begun" (*Daily News*). Personally, we always make our oranges in readiness for the pantomimes, or in summer, when the weather is thirstier.

* * *

Complaint is made that directions to the Booking Office at Charing Cross are displayed in German. It does seem unnecessary, as they'll never have the chance of taking a return ticket.

* * *

"Will anyone who knows explain the symbolism of the 'dot?'" asks a *Times* "agony." Well, it all depends where you get it—on the snitch or elsewhere. Why not enquire from Bombardier Wells?

* * *

Judging from the wild talk of their politicians and newspaper writers concerning the sinking of "every British ship, whether a war vessel or a merchant vessel," the Germans are unaware of the old cookery-book maxim, "First catch your hare"—and don't get your own off.

* * *

If the Germans require proof of their allegation that Great Britain has been preparing for this war for a long time they can find it in the heading of an evening paper which runs:—

THE GLOBE.
FOUNDED 1803.
FOR RELIABLE WAR NEWS CONCISELY TOLD.

* * *

The Man in the Street of the *Daily Sketch* has come to the conclusion "that the evolution of the existing relations between men and women will receive a notable stimulus as the result of this war." We have parsed and analysed and translated this sapient remark into sixteen languages in the hope of deciphering its inner meaning, but the only explanation we can offer is that The Man has noticed the activity in the war marriage market, and is referring thereto in felicitous terms.

The Editor will be pleased to consider short stories, 750 to 2,000 words, and humorous topical "skits" not exceeding 1,000 words. Payment at usual rates.

SHOCKING TRAGEDY IN THE NEW FOREST.

Probable Assassination of King of England.

(Being an essay in the "it must have been" mode of historiography recently affected by certain of our journalists.)

On the morning of August 2nd, 1100, William Rufus rode forth with a train of courtiers, probably from the King's house, Lyndhurst, into the forest, which his father had made his royal hunting-ground. The party included the King's brother Henry, his favourite, Walter Tyrrel, William de Breteuil, and, no doubt, also Ralph Flambard, the Justiciar, and any other Norman nobles mentioned in the history books as being alive at the time. English summers have always been the same, and we may safely conclude that the sky was laden and that an icy, sleet-laden wind blew into the faces of the huntsmen. Ere the party had proceeded far into the woods, the dogs—they would be deer-hounds—no doubt sighted or scented—whichever deer-hounds do—a well-grown red, or fallow-deer, of perhaps ten hands—if deer are measured in hands—and gave tongue right royally to the quarry. The huntsmen must have followed up swiftly, but before long the King, mounted on his huge roan hunter, called, shall we say, Soufflefeu, outpaced all his companions save Tyrrel, who was a splendid horseman, and could perhaps have outstripped the monarch himself had it been courtierly policy to do so. Rufus, being a short man, probably had a leaning towards high mounts, just as big men find stumpy women most attractive, and vice-versa.

Then, as far as we can make out, the pair dashed on through timber and glade till the ruck were left far behind. Here was Tyrrel's chance. Dropping back from his Royal companion, he must have slipped from his horse with a loud cry for help, at the same time taking out a crossbow and quarrel which he had doubtless concealed under the rich trappings of his steed. It could not have been the long-bow, which, as may be seen from the Toxophilite Section of Crammage's Illustrated Catalogue (Ad.), was six feet in length, and therefore too big for concealment, and it is most unlikely that Tyrrel would have risked a running shot, for, being a knight, and used only to sword and lance-play, he could not have been any too brilliant as an archer. At this untimely interruption in the sport, his Majesty, who was easily moved to wrath, probably rapped out a volley of oaths in mediæval English, such as "By my halidom" and "Oddsfish," and perhaps reined up and returned in the direction of the cry for help, calling out: "D—n you, Tyrrel, why can't you have your bilious attacks at a more convenient time?"

By this time Walter would have hidden behind an oak, and when the unsuspecting monarch had approached quite near, he must have let fly the fatal bolt, which struck Rufus fairly in the breast and killed him on the spot. The assassin then leapt into his saddle, rode *ventre-à-terre* for Weymouth, chartered a fishing-boat, and headed for France and safety. To the end of his days he denied that he had slain the Red King, and, were he alive to-day, would probably describe the present historian as the glibbest liar who ever slung ink, but we feel that we have done no harm in laying before the public the facts of the case exactly as they—as likely as not—occurred.

GILBERT HY. COLLINS.

There is nothing that people dislike more than to do good against their will.

"LUCIENNE"

"YVONNE"

"MARCELLE"

"GABY"

Paris 14

GIRLS OF THE CROIX ROUGE FRANCAISE.

A WAR WOOING.

"Oh, it's *you!*" said Delia, as I entered the room. Unabashed by this lack of cordiality in her greeting I chose the most comfortable chair I could find, settled myself in it, and, placing my handkerchief over my face, composed myself for a nap.

I may say in passing that Delia is a most charming girl in every respect, and I have asked her to marry me many times, but on each occasion she has said "No!" Quite nicely, I'll admit, but none the less very firmly.

I suppose it really shows her good sense, but I do wish she would say something else, if only for a change. Of course, "No" is a most useful little word in its way, but one is apt to grow somewhat tired of its constant repetition.

However, in spite of the firmness of her refusals, she tolerates me as a kind of brother, and chooses my suits, socks, and ties with a more than sisterly care.

The real object of my visit that day was to put the question once more, but in the face of the extreme frigidity of my reception I almost resolved to postpone my proposal to some more favourable opportunity.

I was just dropping off into a comfortable sleep when Delia fell upon me—verbally, of course.

"Can't you say something? Don't sprawl there in an ungainly heap with a handkerchief over your face. Your handkerchief isn't a particularly clean one either, you know. Don't you think you had better put it out of sight?" She paused for want of breath.

I sat up with a start and opened my eyes.

"Delia," I said, "since you've roused me from what promised to be a sweet and refreshing slumber, I would inform you that I can 'say something,' as you rather crudely put it. What would you have me say? Would you like my views on the iniquity of the war, or would you prefer a stirring speech on the early closing of the public-houses. I assure you I am so singularly incompetent to speak on either subject that no doubt my remarks would be published broadcast and eagerly seized upon by the nation. . . . You don't answer! You find it difficult to express a preference, I suppose? Well, madam, I will take advantage of your silence to inform you that the handkerchief to which you have just alluded so rudely is by no means dirty. Crumpled, perhaps, but dirty—certainly not!"

Delia condescended to smile.

"Perhaps the handkerchief isn't dirty, but I don't like it, so put it away, like a good little boy. It isn't one of those I chose for you either. Where did you get it?"

I meekly restored the offending handkerchief to my pocket. "You are right," I answered. "It is not one of those you so kindly obtained for me *and* left me to pay for. If you really want to know, it once belonged to a very dear friend of mine who departed this life owing to a surfeit of 'bedroom plays.' He bequeathed this handkerchief to me in order that I might cover my face with it when witnessing plays of that nature, and so be saved from a like fate."

"Your conversation verges upon the improper," said Delia. "As a well-brought-up young person I must decline to listen to you whilst you talk in such a strain."

"Madam, I am contrite," I murmured.

"I'm glad you are," said Delia, and perched herself upon the arm of my chair, idly swinging one daintily shod foot.

I gazed at it with interest.

"Try our latest footwear," I said. "All our 4's are numbered 3's, and our 3's, 2's. Wear a 2 and you're the proud possessor of a No. 1. Invaluable to ladies in these days of Tango skirts and exposure of the extremities."

Delia promptly stood up.

"If you're going to make horrid remarks about the size of my feet, I shall be seriously angry with you," she said.

"I wouldn't anger you for untold wealth," I replied. "Let me rather speak of your hands." Greatly daring, I possessed myself of her left, fearing every instant she would draw it away. "Let me admire those dear little fingers," I cried. "This graceful third finger, beautiful as it is, would look even more adorable with something clasped round it—a half-hoop of pearls and diamonds, for instance. May I not supply this additional ornament, sweetheart?" Delia drew her hand away sharply.

"Nothing doing," I sighed miserably.

Delia gave one of her tantalising laughs. "Ta-ta, Jackie. I'm dining out to-night, and I've heaps of things I simply *must* see to before I dress. Now, don't say any naughty words!"

I *did*, though!

. . . . . .

I didn't see Delia for a long time after that, having plenty of things to keep me busy. I had hoped she'd write to the club or something, but she didn't. Well, one day after a particularly muddy drill (did I say I'd joined the Public School crowd?) I simply *ached* for a sight of her.

After some trouble I managed to get leave, and off I toddled without even wiring to say I was coming. When I got to town I began to feel a bit of an idiot coming up from Epsom without letting her know, but I decided to go on as I had started. Privately, I was rather wondering what she would have to say about my appearance in uniform, for Delia can be beastly sarcastic sometimes. I hadn't told her I'd joined either, and that might get her back up.

My luck was in, and so was Delia.

Believe me, directly she saw me she screamed out, "Oh! Jack, you *dear!*" and then started saying I was a hero and a lot of similar bosh. She made me feel an awful ass, I can tell you.

However, everything is settled now, and we're going to be married before I go out. This rotten war has done *me* a bit of good, anyhow.

When I come to think of it I don't believe I proposed to her either.

CYRIL G. HARRIDGE.

The Premier referred in the House the other night to the practice at the Post Office of opening suspected letters. In this way most of the German spies in England have been discovered. There are some very elaborate devices employed for the work, including the most delicate knife in the world, which cuts a tiny shred off the end of the envelope. The letter is abstracted, read, photographed, and put back, when gum is used to seal it up again. It then passes through a special roller, and at the end it is impossible to detect that the message has been tampered with.

* * *

Th H.A.C., which has been doing wonders at the front, is one of the oldest military bodies in this country. At its fine headquarters in the City they will tell you that its men fought for King Alfred, and hundreds of years later took a prominent part in subduing the Gordon riots. Among those who have joined the ranks of the Honourable Artillery Company in the past is Pepys, the essayist. As a matter of fact the regiment's title is a misnomer, for it is mainly composed of infantry. The explanation of this is that once upon a time bows were regarded as artillery weapons!

* * *

It is a thousand pities that the Allies don't possess a general like N. B. Forrest, of American Civil War fame. A most inhuman attempt was made by the Federal enemy, just before one of Forrest's victories, to burn out the gaol where many Confederate prisoners were incarcerated. After the battle, General Forrest asked to have pointed out to him the individual who had ordered the firing of the prison. Later, when the roll of the prisoners was called, there was no response to the name of this man. "Pass right on," said Forrest, grimly, "it's all right."

Punctuality pays if the other fellow is always up to time.

ROUGE AND RUFFLES.

Royal Polygamy.

It is good news to learn that according to the German Press Bureau now established at Constantinople, his Islamic Majesty—otherwise the Kaiser—will send his sheaves in the shape of a harem before him to the Land of the Crescent in the early spring. I am afraid, however, that this Royal recognition of the real need for polygamy is based only upon the fertile imagination of the Teutonic Press Bureau. One can readily believe that a Kaiser with one wife would hardly be as acceptable to the ladies of that land of loose trousers and morals as a Kaiser with a retinue of wives and an open mind for more. So that it is perhaps as well not to rely too much upon this official statement. That we shall come to polygamy one of these days I have no real doubt; but perhaps it is as well that it should not come to us through the medium of German "kultur." We must patiently wait for one of the bishops, fearful of the decrease in the birth-rate—to advocate it from the pulpit, or for the House of Commons to wrap it round in such a maze of words that even the Nonconformists will see nothing scarlet in the proposition, and make a little Bill of it as a welcome relief to Estimates and the Irish question. In the meantime—well, I suppose things will still go on as usual in the meantime. And, anyway, as I said before, it doesn't do to rely too much upon Kaiser "Bill."

* * *

One Hundred—Not Out.

To show what can be done by a woman when she really makes up her mind to do a thing thoroughly, let me tell you about a little old woman, looking for all the world as if her greatest indiscretion had been a tea fight at some religious institution or other, a little old woman who nevertheless cheerfully informed a magistrate, when brought into court as a witness against two men who had been fighting over her, that she had lived with a hundred different men in her time. The unco' guid among us may turn up the whites of their eyes and pretend to be shocked—you can't really shock a very good person, by the way—he or she knows too much—but I, for one, can't help admiring her courage. Fancy having to put up with ninety-nine editions of one man, for every man is the same, you know—a little better or a little worse, that's all. The shades are too infinitesimal to worry about. Once you know one man, you know the lot. But a woman—well, a woman is a different proposition altogether. Every woman differs from another as race from race. You may know a thousand, and yet never really get to the bottom of one. A woman is unfathomable, and yet so shallow that you can sound her heart-depths with a plumb-line. That's woman.

* * *

Good-bye Romance.

Valentine's Day passed unnoticed and unsung so far as I was concerned. No young man sent me a poetic effusion, with a border of paper lace round it as a temporary substitute for himself, or a bouquet in a stiff little holder, or even the modern equivalent of a valentine—a box of chocolates. As for anybody asking me to hold his hand or his heart, no such thing occurred. All I held all day was my own head. (N.B.—I have had influenza.) Perhaps the influenza explains why the young men didn't call. Nothing kills romance so quickly as a cold in the head. Nobody wants to kiss a girl, be her lips ever so red, if her nose is red as well. And supposing any modern man to be so up in prophecies as to know that "on Valentine's Day the first maid you see, in spite of all ill, shall your true love be," one can hardly blame him for not wishing his true love to give him not only herself but the germ of influenza as well. It may be that in the olden days true lovers didn't worry about such trifling things as colds. With Angelina always "in the vapours" and Caroline in hysterics, Molly in a "decline" and Jane in a "pet," one can quite understand that a little thing like a cold wouldn't frighten him off. But now life is changed, and man is changed, and, what is most important of all, even love is changed. He's not a rosy little boy any more, but a grown-up youth in spectacles.

LOUISE HEILGERS.

She: "Are you going to keep a diary at the front?"
He: "No. A scrap-book."

The number of regimental colours in the United Kingdom has been augmented of late—a very rare proceeding, for our famous fighting bands hesitate long before they put the square of tattered silk on the retired list. Every regiment has two flags, which at first sight both seem alike. The background is a Union Jack, and in the centre of this is embroidered a crown and the regimental crest. On one of them the names of the battles in which the regiment has taken part is also embroidered. The Grenadier Guards, however, have such a wonderful war history that both flags have had to be utilised for this purpose.

ENCOURAGING.

Professor of chemistry: If anything should go wrong in this experiment, we and the laboratory with us might be blown skyhigh. Come closer, gentlemen, so that you may be better able to follow me.

* * *

HE KNEW DIFFERENT.

Peckham: My wife talks, talks, talks all the time.
Underthum: You're mistaken. She must listen part of the time or my wife wouldn't be with her so much.

BY THE WAY.

Anybody who has ever read "Nicholas Nickleby," will not need to be told what Dickens's views were on the subject of people who "adapted" other people's novels to the stage. He does not call them blanked thieves, but he means it. Says Nicholas to the "literary gentleman" at the farewell dinner to Vincent Crummles: "If I were a writer of books, and you a thirsty dramatist, I would rather pay your tavern score for six months—large as it might be—than have a niche in the Temple of Fame with you for the humblest corner of my pedestal, through six hundred generations." Adaptations in Dickens's day were not what they are now, and I think the great man would alter his views if he saw Sir Herbert Tree's productions—and drew the royalties. Still, there are people who think that classics not originally written for the stage should not be seen there.

* * *

I met such a man the other evening, and endeavoured to convince him that "David Copperfield" at His Majesty's was in every way worthy of the master. But he would not be convinced. "Dickens desecrated!" was his reiterated catch-phrase. After dinner he carried me off to a taxi. "Haymarket!" he called to the driver. I said not a word, and we arrived at the theatre just as the curtain was rising. We sat through an act and a half; and then my companion could stand it no longer. "Dick Lascelles," in the person of Mr. Godfrey Tearle, was holding the stage, when my neighbour gasped, "I tell you, it's Dickens desecrated!" and slipped out of his stall into the foyer. When he was calmer I pointed out, as tactfully as I could, that we were on the wrong side of the street, and that "The Flag Lieutenant" was not based on anything that Dickens had ever written. It is this sort of incident that makes one realise the blindness of the average bigot.

Of all the back-handed compliments I ever heard, commend me to Reuter's description of Sir Leslie Rundle's departure from Malta on giving up the Governorship to take command of the 5th Army:—"It would be no exaggeration to say that half of Malta cheered Sir Leslie and Lady Rundle with the greatest enthusiasm when they motored to the Marina." Why this enthusiasm at his departure, one might ask—if one did not know that Rundle was a huge success in a dull job? The awkward phrasing of Reuter's message recalls the story of the correspondent who wired from Zanzibar, shortly after a fleet of British gunboats had blown half the place to smithereens as the result of the then Sultan's recalcitrant conduct:—"The Sultan's harem and all the principal shops are now being rebuilt, and business will presently be resumed."

* * *

Revivals, revivals, and still more revivals. An immature actor—I call him immature for fear of hurting his feelings by telling too much of the truth—put up "Hamlet" the other night in a northern town. A brutal critic noted the performance thus:—"For many years now the question whether Bacon wrote Shakespeare has been debated in public and private. There is a simple test which would settle the point once and for all. After seeing Mr. Blank's 'Hamlet,' I suggest that the graves of Shakespeare and Bacon each be opened. The one that has turned is the author of the play."

* * *

If the United States are dragged into the war, they will be faced with a problem the like of which, in spite of the ramifications of the German spy system this country has no knowledge of. For example, of New York's 4,000,000 population, a full half-million is German by birth. What a field-day Mr. McKenna would have in such circumstances! But, unless I am mistaken, the Ministry of the Interior, to say nothing of public opinion, will have a more drastic method of coping with the situation than we have displayed over here. The American public can work itself up to frenzy over a trifle; whereas our mistake has been to take the peril within our gates too phlegmatically. We strain at a gnat and swallow the Zoo's Mappin Terraces. To be told—as I was actually told this week—that there is conclusive evidence of Cornish fishermen hanging cans of petrol on their crab-pots to feed German submarines is too thick altogether! The sort of trading with the enemy I object to is to allow an Austrian lately interned in a concentration camp to tour the country as principal man in a well-known comedy at a salary of £30 a week, while plenty of sound English actors are dragging their last pair of boots round from agent to agent and manager to manager.

* * *

A friend of mine home on short leave from the front—he will scarcely admit he is wounded—has been doing a bit of fishing in Scotland, and the landlady of his rooms has

Dubois: "Those British are dashing, gallant young fellows to a man."
Dupont: "Yes, and to a woman also, it seems."

relied more or less on his rod for the sustenance of her guest and herself. Fush, fush, fush, three times a day for a week rather bored him, so he drove into the county town and bought himself some butcher's meat. He should have had sausages for breakfast the next morning, but only the skins appeared on the table. "What t'ell?" he asked. "I thot it luked sma' guids *when I'd cleaned em*!" the old woman remarked ingenuously. My friend is wondering whether he or she is the fool.

* * *

Nobody realises better than the British naval officer the grimness of the struggle in which the nation is plunged. That is why there has been no "ragging scandal" during the past few weeks—which there certainly would have been if the Senior Service had not been occupied with more serious matters than the behaviour of one of the members of the naval wing of the Royal Flying Corps. This man was gazetted to a commission on account of his prowess in the air, and, the day after, came out in full uniform; a proof that he had the blessed things ready at home. He spoiled the effect somewhat, however, by sporting a plum-coloured tie with it. He has roughed-up the Service in another respect, too; he is always getting in the way of a man with a camera—and the Navy does *not* advertise. Of course, a naval airman ought not to buy coloured socks and ties; he ought to bi-plane (Sorry.)

* * *

One lives and learns. I learned the other afternoon that a "bar sinister" was something to be proud of rather than otherwise—though, to be sure, it is hard to saddle errors of omission and commission upon the resulting generation. It was at an informal concert given by a rather well-known singing teacher, and a girl of some twenty summers had sung prettily, but without any great distinction, a number of commonplace ballads. Afterwards I was told that she was the daughter of a certain sporting peer. I said nothing, but racked my brain to try and remember, if I could, how many daughters the sporting peer had. And I could not—off-hand—re-call one. Presently light was shed on my darkness, when the girl remarked confidentially (more or less) that one of the ballads was originally sung by her mother at the old Gaiety. And a moment later the said mother called for her daughter; whereupon I recognised a beauty of other days who for many years lived in obscurity on the proceeds of a sensational breach-of-promise case. There is quite the George-the-Fourth touch about this open acknowledgement of a liaison in high life.

* * *

I wonder if the Kaiser ever ruminates on the answer he got from Sir Ian Hamilton, at Grand Manœuvres long ago, when William asked him what he thought of the German infantry mass formation. "I think it is too dense, sir," replied General Hamilton. "Pooh!" rejoined the Kaiser. "Of course, we should expect to lose a few men; but then we can afford to." Well, if the pretty gentleman goes on losing a "few" more, there won't be anyone left to beat the Potsdam kettledrum.

* * *

Captain Armitage's letter home, telling how the Saxon troops hung out a notice to our men telling them to "keep their bullets for the Prussians, as we are Saxons and you are Anglo-Saxons," is of peculiar significance. It may, incidentally, be very far-reaching. Conversely, at the "Battle of the Nations," around Leipzig in 1813, 10,000 Saxon troops suddenly "went over to the Allies with a shout." In the course of the same battle, the whole of the Bavarians changed sides without any warning whatever. In a word, these conscripts of the various States that were confederated to become the German Empire in 1871, hate to be coerced. Moreover, their hearts are not for a moment in the present wicked struggle or its motives. And don't forget that poor Hans is essentially a homing bird.

Absent-minded beggar (as sidesman presents plate): "Pass, friend!"

* * *

The appearance of Lord Cromer's timely "Abbas II.", in whose brilliant pages the great pro-Consul wipes the floor with the deposed Khedive, reminded me strongly of the little-known facts of the Earl of Cromer's extraordinary affection and admiration for "K. of K." When they first met, the one was Sir Evelyn Baring and the other Major Kitchener, R.E. (Sir E. Wood was then in Egypt. What a combination—Evelyn Baring, Evelyn Wood, and Herbert Kitchener!) "Whatever you do, and whatever you wish," wrote Cromer to Kitchener after a brief acquaintance, "I will support you by every means in my power." And on Kitchener's few and hurried visits home for a little needed rest, Lord Cromer always placed his own carriage at K.'s disposal.

* * *

To those of my readers who may query how "Jacker" will cotton on to the novel atmosphere of Parliamentary life, I would say that he has never lacked confidence. This is *not* to say that he really did say of his Harrow triumph that he "didn't mind for himself, but 'twould give the guv'nor such a lift." But I do know that at the Eton v. Harrow match of '88 his father promised him a shilling for every run and a "quid" for every wicket he took. "I got eleven wickets and eighty runs," says Jackson, "but the offer was never repeated."

THE LOITERER.

IN STAGELAND.

I doubt if there is any contemporary London manager who has a greater sense of the "fitness" of doing a production properly than Mr. Bob Courtneidge. This is conspicuously true of the current Shaftesbury revival of "Tales of Hoffmann," which is a perfect riot of colour, melody, and harmonious effects. Certainly no pains have been spared either as regards the mounting or the quality of the brilliant artists engaged. First of these one must name Mr. John Harrison as Hoffmann himself—he sings better than ever before, and his articulation is lucidity itself. Then we had Frederic Austin doubling the rôles of Coppelius and Dr. Mirakel, Mr. Arthur Wynn in about half-a-dozen various characters, and Miss Edith Evans as the Giulietta. Miss Edith Clegg is also heard to the greatest advantage, and Nora d'Argel has made an extraordinary advance. Hamish McCunn conducted splendidly, and this superb revival must be seen.

Have you heard Stella Carol on the high C's at the Empire? If not, do hurry up and hear her, for the way in which she tackles that G in alt is simply stupendous. I enjoyed her supremely beautiful voice in such familiar strains as Bishop's "Lo! hear the gentle lark," David's "Charmant Oiseau," and Tosti's ever-inspiring, if slightly lachrymose, "Good-bye." All this may sound rather remarkable fare for a variety theatre's bill, yet at the Empire I really believe the audience would have liked to "eat" Miss Carol.

The cast for the revival of "Fanny's First Play" at the Kingsway is chiefly remarkable for the return of Miss Lena Ashwell after a three years' absence from the London stage, during which she has been ill, has been to America, and has been going in for women's rights, and other things. Also for the appearance of Henry Ainley as "Juggins," a rôle in which he should prove inimitable. It will be interesting to see how Bernard Shaw's flippant comedy "goes" in war-time, after its initial prodeegious run of five hundred performances.

Artistically, perhaps the most interesting current item is that Mrs. Langtry has "tried" (at Sheffield) a posthumous play by the late Sydney Grundy. It is titled "Mrs. Thomson," and is a version of the novel of that name by the late Miss Braddon's very brilliant son, W. B. Maxwell. Oddly enough, its production must have almost synchronised with the death of the great Victorian woman-novelist. May we hope to see "Mrs. Thomson" in town soon, Mrs. L.?

As it happened, I knew Sydney Grundy rather intimately. A big man, of big ideas, he wouldn't have any of the "isms." I well remember his saying to me, at the time of the Ibsen boom, "I regard Ibsen as a dirty old man." Then he goes away and perpetrates "The Degenerates"—was there no Ibsenism in *that*?—while his brother-playwrights were all more or less obsessed by the Ibsen spirit—*e.g.*, "Mrs. Tanqueray," "Mrs. Lessingham," etc.

H. B. Irving appears to have got a real winner in "Searchlights," and I'm sure I hope he has. The author, H. A. Vachell, is a skilled and approved novelist, who has not as yet entirely mastered the "sense of the theatre"—which, if I remember rightly, was why his "Jelf's" did not enjoy a long run at Wyndham's, though splendidly interpreted by Gerald du Maurier and company. "Searchlights" is a much better play than "Jelf's."

Mr. Irving himself could not be better, the character fitting him like the proverbial glove. Perhaps the best of the support afforded him comes from Miss Fay Davis and Holman Clark, the latter's ripe comedy powers being at their best in the rôle of a "spying" but delicious old German.

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* * *

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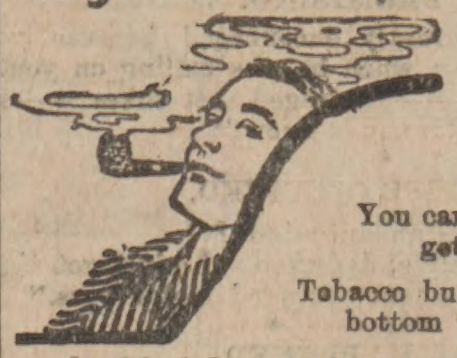

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